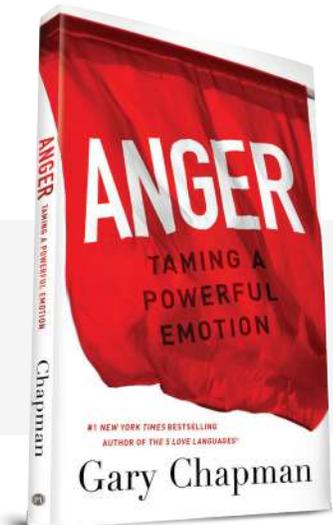


DEALING WITH ANGER TOWARD YOUR SPOUSE

Here are six steps for dealing with anger you feel toward your spouse. Most of these six steps should be in place before the anger comes; that way, when it appears, an agreed-upon plan can help calm and direct the discussion.

1. **Acknowledge the reality of anger.** Whether your anger is legitimate definitive anger or distorted anger, do not condemn yourself for experiencing anger. Recognize and admit to it, remembering that the anger itself is not sinful.
2. **Agree to acknowledge your anger to each other.** Express clearly your feeling of anger when it arises; do not make your spouse guess based on your behavior. Both you and your spouse deserve to know when the other is angry and what he or she is angry about.
3. **Agree that verbal or physical explosions against the other person are not appropriate responses to anger.** Either kind of explosion will always make things worse.
4. **Agree to seek an explanation before passing judgment.** Remember that your first impression is only tentative; at times it will be faulty. It is easy to misinterpret the words and actions of one's spouse, so seek your mate's perspective. He or she may supply valuable missing information that could change your understanding of the issue.
5. **Agree to seek a resolution.** With more information from your spouse and the fuller perspective, you are ready to find a solution satisfactory to both of you. Resolving the angry feelings may require that you seek the person's confession and repentance—if the wrongdoing is valid and definitive—or recognize your anger as invalid and perhaps selfish—if the anger is distorted. It may even require confession and asking of forgiveness on your part, if the wrongdoing is by you. Whatever the cause, work toward a reconciliation between the two of you.
6. **Agree to affirm your love for each other.** After the anger is resolved, verbally declare your love for each other.

Keep in mind that most of these six steps should be in place before anger appears, so that when it occurs, you have a plan to help direct the discussion. With these six "anger agreements" between husband and wife, you can have an effective strategy for resolving anger in marriage.



For more information about *Anger: Taming a Powerful Emotion* by Gary Chapman or to take the Personal Anger Assessment, visit www.5lovelanguages.com/anger.